The Myrtle.

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13

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For the Myrtle.

The Little Ragged Boy.

THE autumn winds had searched the trees,
And hurled the leaves about my door,
When forth I went with rake in hand,
To gather in a winter's store.

And as I oft my basket filled,
There came a little ragged boy,
And in true baby earnestness,
He aided in my new employ.

But how he strewed my piles of leaves!
And wondered when we should "dit froo!"
How much he plagued the friend he "hepped,"
Poor little heart! He never knew.

With unskilled hands the rake he drew,—
'Twas nearly broken at the end—
One short, quick jerk, and then 'twas seen
A useless thing no hand could mend.

In playful mood, to try the child—
I own 'twas rather cruel fun—
I sharply said in angry tones
"See what your careless work has done."

A little statue then he stood,
A pearly tear-drop in his eye,
His little breast convulsive shook,
And well I knew the reason why.

"O, I don't blame you," then I said,
"The rake was broken long ago."
He raised his coal-black eyes to mine,
And, as his cheeks resumed their glow,

He caught my hand in both of his;—
E'en now I bear his tones in mind—
"You're dood," he said, "I think you are,
I think you're real dood and kind."

Through all that day my mind was filled
With thoughts that made me sing for joy,
As fancy oft brought back the words
Of that neglected, ragged boy.

I know 'twas but a little thing—
The few and earnest words he said,
But yet how oft by little things
An erring mind is quickly led.

I formed a resolution then,
And sealed it with this heartfelt prayer;
"Since words must touch the tender heart,
Let mine fall ever gently there."

H. H. D.

For the Myrtle.

Jack Frost and the Wind.

I HAVE never seen Jack Frost, but I know him and like him, because he is kind and good. I am sure he is kind, because in the night he comes from his far off home, and softly and carefully scatters over all things his diamonds, not forgetting a single blade of grass, nor the smallest flower that hides down so deep that *we* can never find it.

I know Jack Frost is good, because, if I lock all the doors when I hear him whisper through the key-hole, "Let me come in," he does not get angry, but paints for me on the window panes pictures of his home. There are shining castles of ice and snow, and a wide sea full of great icebergs sunk down so deep that I can only see their summits, over which the waves are trying to leap.

Here and there are huge white cliffs, and a ship making her way through the narrow places all alone, is caught by one of them and held fast. Sometimes he paints me faces, some sad, some merry, and some young, and some old, indeed he paints all kinds of faces. There are pictures of trees and flowers, but, since I know that none of these can grow where Jack Frost lives, I suppose he paints them to let us see how they would look if they *did* grow there. Many more pictures he paints for me, so many that I cannot remember them all, and I have not seen half yet, for he will paint more when he comes again.

Jack Frost is very old, for no one can count the years he has lived. His hair is as white as the snow of his home, and so is his beard which is very long, but he does not look old in the face because of his pleasant smile. He is very quick and noiseless in his motion, and in stature, it seems to me he is small, and he stoops just a very little, perhaps because of his age, and perhaps because he is always bending down to give something.

This is the Jack Frost I know, and he is not at all like a friend of his, who is as noisy as he is still. This friend is the wind. Not the wind that comes with the rain in the warm spring and summer days, but the one that whistles so loud in the cold winter nights, and who does so much mischief. When I sit at my window I can hear him whistling, so I look out and see all the leaves on the trees dancing. Louder and louder he whistles, and faster and faster they dance, until at last they dance down off the trees, along the walls over the fields and are lost from sight. He tells me how beautiful his home is in the far north, and of the sky which the moon loves so well that she stays there nearly all the time. In the long winter evenings he comes and every night has a new story. "I will tell you how I became Jack Frost's friend," he says.

"In a land where no spring comes lived a great and good king. He had one son, and they were so happy together that the years flew past like birds. But it happened at last, that the king took the hand of his son and said, 'I am going on a long, long journey to to a country more fair than this, and which I love so much better, that I shall never come back. You will be lonely, but perhaps sometime you will find a friend. Do good and I will watch over you.' The son saw him no more and was full of sorrow. Long years he waited for a friend, but no friend came, and all the days seemed alike to him and grief would not go away.

"One day he thought of his father's words, and they cheered him, and he said to himself, 'I will go to the land where the flowers grow and cover them with the treasure which he loved to see. My father will know them, and will take the flowers out of the cold ground and will plant them in the gardens of the land he loves so well, and they will grow and be more beautiful than they are now.'

Again and again he did this. At length one night he found the flowers gone and knew his father had taken them. He was going back alone, when he heard snme one sighing, and looking round saw the wind who had been wandering about all day and was looking for a resting place. This wind had three brothers, the East wind, the West wind, and the South wind, and they were all powerful kings and lived in the three corners of the earth, and he had been to them, but they would not let him come into their kingdoms, and now he was faint and weary and had no place to which he could go. Then Jack Frost took the stranger to his own beautiful home in the far North, let him live there always and called him his friend."

"This is all to-night," says the Wind suddenly, when I think I shall hear much more. "It happened so long ago that no one remembers it. I tell it to you that you may know how good Jack Frost is."

Then he bids me good night and begins to whistle. I look at the windows and know Jack Frost is painting them. By and by they are finished and the whistling grows fainter and fainter and I know by the stillness that Jack Frost and the Wind have gone home. *M. C. Schouler.*

Little Freddy and his Penny.

"Mother, I've got a penny; may I go and spend it?" asked little Freddy one day as he twirled the new, bright coin in his fingers.

"What do you wish to get with it, my son?" asked his mother.

"Oh! I don't know," said he, casting his eyes down. "A stick of candy."

"You know, Freddy," said his mother, "I don't like you to eat candy; and there is nothing else you can get for a penny that you will care for at all five minutes after you get it. I do wish, my son, that your pennies did not trouble you so much."

"Trouble me, mother! How do they trouble me?"

"As soon as you get one, you want to spend it, Freddy; and, as you can't do so without displeasing me or doing yourself harm, I think they are more trouble than pleasure to you."

"Oh, dear!" said Freddy, throwing himself on the floor, and drawing a long sigh. "I don't know *what* to do. I'm sure I wish I *could* spend my money."

"Freddy," said his mother, "did you ever think how much good your pennies might do if

you would only save them till you get a good many of them together, and then give them to some poor person, or buy a nice book to give to some poor child who has no books, as you have?"

"Why, mother, I never thought of that," said Freddy, brightening up. "I'll try to save my pennies after this, and see what good I can do with them."

Freddy ran into his own little room, and dropped his penny into a small box which stood on the table. After this, he went on carefully gathering up the fragments. Whenever a penny was given to him, he would put it into his box. He told his mother, one day, that the pennies didn't trouble him any more, since he had found out what to do with them. He liked to get money and save it, that he might do good with it.

One day, about two or three months after this, Freddy came home from school in a great hurry. He ran into the house, and, without stopping to speak to any one, rushed into his own room, seized his money-box, emptied it, and was off again before his mother had time to notice what he was doing. In about half an hour he came back again, looking very bright and happy.

"Why, Freddy," said his mother, "what does all this mean? Why did you run into the house and fly out again without stopping to speak to any one?"

"O mother! please excuse me. I was in such a hurry, I forgot all about it. I wanted my pennies to buy a new slate for little Sally Brown. She fell down and broke hers just as she was coming out of the schoolroom. You know the people she lives with don't love her, and would have whipped her if she had carried home the broken one. So I told her not to cry, but walk slowly on, and I would get her a new one in a few minutes. I was in such a dreadful hurry, because her mistress would scold her if she wasn't home at the usual time. I am *so* glad, mother, that I followed your advice, and saved my pennies! I'm sure it was nicer to help poor Sally in her trouble than to have had *all the candy in town to eat.*"

Freddy remembered his mother's good advice in after-life. He kept on gathering up the fragments, and so often had in in his power to do good to others in a way that made him feel truly happy.—*Rev. Dr. Newton.*

THE seeds of repentance are sown in youth.

The Apple Pie.

Now, children dear, come round me here,
And I will tell to you
The story of an apple-pie;
But, ah, heigh-ho! it makes me sigh
To think the tale is true.

There lived, not very long ago,
But very far away,
Two children who, like some of you,
Had scarcely anything to do
But jump about and play.

One day Aunt Mary was to come,
They heard with great delight;
And John and Bessie were to be
Allowed to stay down stairs to tea,
And welcome her that night.

Mamma she thought an apple-pie
For supper would be fit;
But poor John and Bessie said,
"Alas! we both shall be in bed,
And never taste a bit."

The pie was made, and put away
Upon a shelf with care;
The children by the window stood,
And oh, it smelt so very good
As it was cooking there,

That Johnny said, "I really think
I will go in, and see
If I can raise the top a bit,
Then we can have a taste of it—
Come, Bessie, come with me."

And so they went: they got a spoon,
And turn by turn they ate;
It was *so* good, they ate—ah me!
Until they only left, you see,
The pie-crust and—the plate!

They waited for Aunt Mary long;
When she at last was come,
She begged mamma to let them stay
With her to supper for that day;
The children both were dumb.

Poor Johnny's cheeks grew burning red,
He glanced at every one;
But little Bessie hung her head,
And to herself she quickly said,
"Oh, what will now be done?"

The pie was brought, and then papa
Began to help it soon;
He cut the crust, and said, "My dear,
What sort of apple-pie is here?
I only see—a spoon!"

The spoon—ah me! the children both
Were startled at the sight,
For now they knew the silent Eyes
That looked upon them from the skies,
Had brought their sin to light.

THE good wear their years as a crown of glory upon their head, the bad as a burden upon their back.

For the Myrtle.

Three Schoolgirls.

THREE schoolgirls over their lessons bent,
All still, by the evening light:
Their lips in a busy murmur went
For the task must be done to-night
"To-morrow," they said, "we shall sore repent,
If all is not learned aright."

"Now what," said Maud, "is the worst you fear
If the lesson at last should fail?"
And May looked up with a grimace queer,—
"Oh, I know that the rest would rail
That the girls would laugh and the boys would sneer,—
At the very thought I quail."

"And what," said Grace, "is your thought of dread?"
And Maud said, "Oh, that frown!
If I left to my teacher a word unsaid
And brought his censure down,
More his displeasure would bow my head
Than the sneers of all the town."

"Then what," cried May, "would *you* grieve for most?"
And said Grace, "my heart would burn
That I had forgotten at such dear cost
The truth we all must learn:
I should grieve," she said, "for the lesson lost,
And the day that would ne'er return."

H. A. B.

"Father Knows."

A GENTLEMAN was one day opening a box of dry goods. His little son was standing near, and, as his father took the packages from the box, he laid some of them upon the arm of the boy. A young friend and playmate of the merchant's son was standing by looking on. As parcel after parcel was laid upon the arm of the boy, his friend began to fear his load was becoming too heavy, and said,—

"Johnny, don't you think you've got as much as you can bear?"

"Never mind," answered Johnny, in a sweet, happy tone, "father knows how much I can carry."

Brave, trusting little fellow! He did not grow restless or impatient under the burden. There was no danger, he felt, that his father would lay too heavy a load on him. His father knew his strength, or rather the weakness of that little arm, and would not overtask it. More than all, his father loved him, and therefore would not harm him. It is such a spirit of loving trust in Him that God desires all His children to possess.

—o-o—

"I Want To Be An Angel."

"I want to be an angel," Bobby kept singing at the top of his voice, except when he was teasing the cat, spilling his milk, contradicting Bridget, or making mud-pies; "I want to be an angel, and with the angels stand."

"That is all well and good when the time comes," cried Bridget at last, quite out of temper; "but before you can get to be an angel, Bobby, you must just want to be a good boy. Good children is the stuff angels are made of; mind that, sir. Put it this way, 'I want to be a good boy, and with the good boys stand.' Then folks can know how much you mean it."

Bobby did not like Bridget's view of the case, so he made up a lip and walked off.—*Child's Paper.*

A LIE always needs a truth for a handle to it, or else he who handles it would cut himself with his own tool.

For the Myrtle.

A Strong Team.

"TELL us what you used to do when you were a little girl."

That was the unfailing answer, when the plea for a story came, and auntie, being at her wits' end inquired "what shall it be about?"

"O dear," said auntie, "I've told you everything I ever did, or said, or thought of, I think." And then she mused awhile. "But let me see; —I thought of something about your uncle George, when I saw a picture to-day. I wonder if I ever told you about his cat team?"

Cries of "no, no," and "please tell it," came from all the children.

"Well," said auntie, "when uncle George was

about the size of Georgie, he was up to all sorts of experiments and pranks about machinery. He had water-wheels and windmills, and made trunks, and valises, and small articles of furniture, and kept his little up-stairs 'shop' a perfect den of mystery and confusion with his wonderful inventions.

"Among other things he made a complete little set of harnesses. They were the wonder and delight of my childish eyes. I can see them now, with their well-oiled straps and shining buckles, the finest things that ever a boy made!

"What he was going to do with them I never dreamed. But one day he called to me over the stairs with a strange sort of hurry and eagerness in his voice. I ran up and looked in at the door. There sat that boy, with one of our big gray cats 'tackled' in the harness! while the other he was fitting to the exact size of puss number two. Towser, whom we had harnessed into our little wagon many a time before, looked gravely on, as if he disapproved of the whole thing, and would like to say to the span of pussies, 'You're getting into deeper trouble than you're aware of.'

"George drew up the wagon, which he had loaded lightly with blocks, and harnessed in his cats. I can see them this moment, just how surprised and awkward they acted, and how he had to turn them around and straighten them out. When all was done he gave them a soft little s-c-c-c, and we stood back to see what they would do.

"My, how funnily they ran across the chambers! Side by side, straight on, the wagon clattering after them, they ran like two galloping steeds. But when they came to the stairs then there was trouble. One cat bounded onward and one hung back in fear. Over the whole team went, smash-bang, down the stairs, one cat jumping, one rolling and dragging. By the time they reached the lower broad stair the wagon was left behind, in a sad condition, and two frightened children were pegging down stairs after them as fast as possible.

"'What on earth!' screamed the housekeeper, hearing the clatter and running from the pantry to see who had fallen down stairs. But she only saw a glimpse of something, like a streak of light, going through the open doors, for the cats had gathered up and run again.

"'Children! what's all this noise about!' thundered our father, disturbed from his writing and coming to the hall-door, spectacles on and pen in hand.

"But George only paid attention enough to either, to shout in agony, as he went tearing on after, 'stop the cats! stop the cats!'

On they cantered until they reached the yard door where were four deep steps. Here the same process was repeated. One cat was for advance, the other for retreat. So by the same performance of growling and spitting, jumping, rolling and tumbling over and over, they landed at the bottom.

"In the yard George caught them, still harnessed tightly together. Even in his fright and distress he did not cut a single strap, but carefully unbuckled every one, bearing bites and scratches like a hero. The moment the cats were free they went out of sight, like a flash, one up a tree, the other into the depths of the woodshed.

"You may fancy George and I looking at each other as solemnly as two little owls. 'Golly!' said he, 'I thought they'd kill theirselves that time.'

"Father, who had been looking on, and saw us come back with the harnesses, went back to his room with a queer smile in his eyes; and afterwards when he wanted to plague George, he was fond of making sly remarks about his strong team. But you may believe *that* team was never harnessed again. *H. A. B.*

WHAT is it that makes a man? Can you tell? We can tell you what does not. Good clothes do not; a handsome face does not; learning does not. You must have something else to make a man of. We have seen a very good description of a man, which reads thus:

> "A beautiful soul, a loving mind,
> Full of affection for its kind;
> A helper of the human race,
> A soul of beauty and of grace;
> That truly speaks of God within,
> And never makes a league with sin."

This is the kind of a man worth something in the world. We want a great many more such men than we have now. Will you not strive to be such a man?

IN joy we wake, in peace we sleep,
Safe from all midnight harms,
Not folded in an angel's wings,
But in a Father's arms.

Our Sunday Schools.

MASSACHUSETTS.

—The members of the large Bible Class of ladies of which Mrs. M. A. Adams of the Second Universalist Church in Lowell has charge, recently presented their teacher, in a meeting at her own home, an elegant silver coffee-urn, as a testimonial of their regard for her and her work with them.

—The Annual Meeting of the Second Universalist Sabbath School in Lowell, was held in their church on the third Sabbath in January. The Annual Report, giving a favorable account of the school, was read by the superintendent, Mr. H. E. Sprague, a discourse to the children was given by the pastor, Rev. J. G. Adams, and addresses made by Rev. Dr. Flanders and Rev. Mr. Twiss. The singing by the school was excellent.

—Rev. A. B. Hervey, of Peabody, gave a good Christmas discourse to the children of his Sabbath School, in the Universalist church in that place. In advising the boys to avoid quarrels, he used this illustration, showing how the fighting disposition often works, and what damage it does: "'We could soon finish you up,' said some lemons to a bottle of carbonate of soda. 'I could soon take the taste out of you,' replied the soda. 'Let us try our strength,' said the lemons. 'With all my heart,' said the soda. And to work they went, each trying with all their might to extinguish the other. 'Fizz' went the lemons, 'Fizz' went the soda, and they went on 'fizzing' till there was nothing of either left, and only a nauseous puddle showed where the fight had been. I never see two boys bandying threats and boasting back and forth, and brandishing fists and posturing for a fight, but I think of the lemons and soda. Life is too short, and this business of following the Lord quite too earnest and serious for us to give a moment to warfare one with another. Besides, all this glorious, beautiful, gentle spirit of Christmas, cries out against it. This is the time for 'Peace on earth, good will to men.'"

VERMONT.

—An excellent exhibition was given week before last on two evenings, by the Sunday School in Springfield, Vt., under the direction of Mrs. J. H. Farnsworth. The proceeds are a "benefit" to the "Organ Society" of our parish in that place.

—Of seven members just received into the Universalist church in Springfield, six were from the Sabbath School.

PENNSYLVANIA.

—Valuable and useful presents were made to Rev. G. Bailey and wife, at the Christmas Festival of the Universalist Sunday School in Reading, Pa.

CONNECTICUT.

—A Sabbath School teacher and all her class were publicly received, with others, into the Universalist church in Hartford, Ct., a few weeks since.

The First Bible Society.

It is said that the occasion of forming the first Bible Society in the Christian Church, was this: A little girl who had no Bible, walked some miles every week to read a Bible and get her Sabbath School lesson. Her little bare feet ached, and her body was weary, and she was one day found shedding tears over her lot, in not having a Bible nearer. But she continued her efforts, still. At last a kind Christian minister found her, and not only obtained a Bible for her, but the story moved many others, till there was a meeting held of those who were disposed to form a Bible Society. The Society was formed, and afterwards became the greatest one in the world—the British and Foreign Bible Society. That which was sown in tears and trial, brought joy and comfort to many souls.

Work and Win.

Whenever we look at the telegraph wire, we cannot help thinking of the perseverance on the part of one man, who has done so much to bring this work of telegraphing to perfection. That man is Mr. Cyrus Field. For thirteen years he was engaged in his work of perfecting and extending this method of communication. "Often," he writes, "has my heart been ready to sink. Many times while wandering in the forests of Newfoundland, in the pelting rain, or on the deck of ships in dark, stormy nights, alone, far from home, I have almost accused myself of madness and folly, thus to sacrifice the peace of my family, and all the hopes of life for what might prove at last only a dream. Yet one hope led me on, and I have prayed that I might not taste death till this work was accompished. That prayer is answered, and now beyond all acknowledgment to men, is the feeling of gratitude to God."

A noble lesson to our youth to persevere in whatever good or useful work they undertake. Success will come, if they are courageous and faithful.

Bible Answers.

Will our young readers take note of these answers which are given in the Bible in favor of the good cause of temperance? Every boy and girl ought to commit them to memory.

Are we to indulge an appetite for strong drink?

"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright."—Prov. xxiii. 31.

What reason is given for this advice?

"At last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder."—Prov. xxiii. 32.

What are the results of intemperance?

"Who hath woe? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine."—Prov. xxiii. 29.

What effect did total abstinence have upon Daniel and his companions?

"Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat nor with the wine which he drank. Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days, and let them give us pulse to eat and water to drink. And at the end of ten days their countenance appeared fatter and fairer in flesh than all the children which did eat of the portion of the king's meat."—Dan. i. 8.

What was predicted of John the Baptist?

"He shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink."—Luke i. 5.

Were the civil rulers to abstain from strong drink?

"It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, nor for princes strong drink."—Prov. xxiv. 4.

Why should magistrates be temperate men?

"Lest they drink and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted,"—Prov. xxxi. 5.

Are we to practice self-denial for others?

"It is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak."—Rom. xvi. 21.

Life of the Saviour.

LESSON LXXII

CHRIST THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

"Our Lord Jesus that great Shepherd of the sheep."

SCRIPTURE, — John x. 1–21.

Question. — What is he that does not enter the sheep-fold by the door?

Answer. — John x. 1.

Q. — How does the shepherd enter the fold?

A. — John x. 2.

NOTE. It is said that oriental shepherds could call their sheep by names. They did not drive them to pasture, but led them, going before them with the shepherd's crook and bag of stones and sling to protect them from beasts of prey. The shepherd put himself in the most exposed and dangerous positions for the sake of his flock

Q. — What is Jesus?

A. — John x. 14.

Q. — What are those who came before him claiming to be the Messiah?

A. — John x. 8.

Q — What were they seeking?

A. — John x. 10.

Q. — For what purpose did Jesus come to his fold?

A. — John x. 10.

Q — What does the good shepherd do?

A. — John x. 11.

Q. — What will the hireling do in danger?

A. — John x. 12, 13.

Q. — What kind of life will Jesus give his sheep?

A. — John x. 27.

Q. — What will the good shepherd do for his sheep?

A. — John x. 15.

Q. — Has Jesus any sheep excepting those of the Jewish fold?

A. — John x. 16.

Q. — When Jesus has called these, what all men make?

A. — John x. 16.

Q. — Shall any one be able to pluck out of his hand?

A. — John x. 29.

Hidden Seed

Enigma.

I am composed of twenty-two letters.
My 18, 8, 20, 16, was a boasting coward.
My 1, 2, 15, 12, 7, 9, was the settlement of the Israelites.
My 22, 13, 7, 19, was chief of Saul's shepherds.
My 3, 8, 14, 21, 17, 15, was a vast chain of mountains.
My 10, 6, 4, 11, is the contraction of thought.
My whole is good advice to a lazy scholar. *Besste.*

Bible Questions.

1. What were the Prophets called before they received the name of Prophets?

2. What man sold all his land and laid the money at the feet of the Apostles?

3. What King sent congratulations to David on his accession to the throne, and aided him in building his palace?

4. A certain man was directed by the Lord to gather stones from the bed of the river Jordan, and erect a monument to commemorote a great event; who was the man, and what was the event?

5. An Apostle wrought a miracle in a certain city, and the people who saw it believed him to be a god, called him Mercurius, and his companion Jupiter; what was the Apostle's name, and who was his companion?

Answers.

JAN. 27. Truth; Righteousness; Egypt; Esther; Olive; Fig; Laodicea; Idumea; Felix, Eternity. Tree of Life.

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